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NO. 16.

HOUSE CLEANING.

How to Kalsomine—Painting Walls—The Way to Clean Woodwork, Carpets, Etc.—Excellent Suggestions on Minor Details.

From the New York Tribune.

In ordinary seasons it is possible to disturb only one or two rooms at a time, but these are times when it is economy to give painters and kalsominers full swing and rush the process of renovation through without delay, possessing one's soul in sweet patience meantime and rejoicing in the joys to come. Where hard finished walls have already been kalsomined, the soiled coats should be washed or scraped off before a new one is put on. This is the most disagreeable part of the process. The furniture should be covered, as lime makes spots that are removed with difficulty, especially upon black walnut. Those who have tried paint on the walls of rooms speak very strongly in its favor. It closes up the pores of the plaster so that it cannot absorb ill odors, it can be easily cleaned with soda and water, (soap and water make it spotty) and it can be made of any desired tint. Perhaps some of our readers do not know what active absorbents paper and plaster are, and, how, when they become thoroughly saturated with various effluvia, nothing but entire renewal will cleanse them. Insects find no harbor in painted walls as they do in papered walls, and when once the paint is dry there is no question about the poisons used in producing desirable tints. Before paint or kalsomine is applied to the walls, every crack and crevice should be filled with plaster or a cement made of one part water to one part of silicate of potash mixed with common whitening. For the kalsomine put a quart of a pound of white glue in cold water over night and heat gradually in the morning until dissolved. Mix eight pounds of whitening with hot water, and the dissolved glue and stir together, adding warm water until about the consistency of thick cream. Use a kalsomine brush and finish as you go along. If skin milk is used instead of water the glue may be omitted. In washing painted walls it is a good plan to remove from the room everything that can be injured by steam and then hang sheets wrung from hot water in the room. The vapor condensing on the walls softens the dirt and it may be wiped off with woolen clothes wrung from soda water. Ceilings that have been smoked by a kerosene lamp should be washed off with soda water. If the wall about the stove has been smoked by the stove cover the black patches with gum shellac and they will not strike through either paint or kalsomine.

Furniture needs cleaning as much as other wood-work. It may be washed with warm soap suds quickly wiped dry, and then rubbed with an oily cloth. For ordinary wood-work use whitening to rub the dirt off and ammonia. Mortar and paint may be removed from window glass with hot, sharp vinegar. Grained wood should be washed with cold tea. Carpets should be beaten on the wrong side first and then on the right, after which spots may be removed by the use of ox gall or ammonia and water. If paper has been laid under the carpet all dust may be removed with it without raising any. The warmth of floors is greatly increased by having carpet lining or layers of paper under it. Drain pipes and all places that are sour or impure may be cleaned with lime water, copperas water or carbolic acid. Copperas mixed with the white wash put upon the cellar walls will keep vermin away. Strong brine may be used to advantage in washing bedsteads, hot alum water is also good for this purpose. Oil of lavender will drive away fleas. Heliolebe sprinkled on the floor at night will drive away cockroaches; they eat it and are poisoned. Cayenne pepper blown into the cracks where ants congregate will drive them away. The same remedy is good also for mice. If gilt frames when new are covered with a coat of white varnish they can then be washed off with water without harm. Good fires should be kept up during house cleaning time even though the doors and windows be kept open, and more than usual attention should be given to the provision of a nutritious and generous diet. Under the most favorable circumstances house cleaning makes immense demands upon the nervous system as well as on the muscular, and good food at regular intervals will be a great help in enabling one to be patient and find comfort in the philosophy set forth at the beginning of this brief essay.

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[Jan 17]

MISCELLANEOUS.

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[July 17-18]

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